



# NEWS RELEASE

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## RURAL DEVELOPMENT HELPS FAMILIES PURCHASE HOMES IN DES LACS and SURREY

*“National Homeownership celebrated with two local families”*

**DES LACS/SURREY, June 20, 2006....**Clare Carlson, State Director for USDA Rural Development in North Dakota, and other Rural Development staff members, today visited the homes of Bryan and Bridget Schaefer, Des Lacs, and Mary Shelkey, Surrey, and their families to personally congratulate and honor them in recognition of June as National Homeownership Month.



The visit is part of a series of events held throughout the nation by USDA Rural Development in celebration of June as National Homeownership Month and President George W. Bush’s initiative to increase homeownership opportunities.

“These homeowners, with their hard work and our efforts, together, help President Bush’s Five Star Commitment on increasing minority homeownership throughout the country,” Carlson said.

“Our congratulations go out to these two homeowners for enduring all challenges and obstacles they faced while achieving the dream of homeownership.”



Mary Shelkey, a single mother with a 14 year old daughter lived and rented an apartment in Grenora for many years. Because of a job change, Mary and her daughter moved into Surrey. Wanting a home of her own, Mary qualified as a first-time homebuyer utilizing Rural Development’s 502 Direct Loan program. Being a licensed contractor, Mary was able to make many of the necessary repairs herself, saving a significant amount of money. Today, Mary and her daughter are enjoying the “dream of homeownership.”

Committed to the future of rural communities.

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Bryan and Bridget Schaefer, along with their three-year old triplets, were renting a house in Des Lacs. Always wanting to have a home for his family, Bryan purchased a tract of land from his father. The Schaefers purchased a new manufactured home, and qualified as first-time home buyers using Rural Development's 502 Direct Loan program. Today the Schaefer family is enjoying the "dream of homeownership" living in a safe, comfortable home with room for their children to play.

Donated by Upper Dakota Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D), a tree is presented to each family during today's celebration.

In honor of the Shelkey family, a seven-foot Prairie Fire Crabapple tree, a decorative type, is being planted in the family's yard.

In honor of the Schaefer family, a seven-foot Sweet Sixteen Apple tree, a delicious eating type, is being planted in the family's yard.

Special thanks go out to RC&D Coordinator Allan Pfliger, RC&D Acting Coordinator Emery Dubin, and Upper Dakota RC&D Chairman Ernie Medalen for their assistance in obtaining the two trees for this event.

In Fiscal Year 2005, USDA Rural Development provided over **\$79.8 million** in loan and grant financing to North Dakota citizens.

USDA Rural Development is the lead federal entity for rural economic and community development needs. It administers financial and technical assistance through a network of state Rural Development offices, various non-profit and educational institutional partners, and its national office.

Further information on these and other rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>

